

As a Father, Have You Taken a Free Pass?

At 18 months old, my son wakes up every morning with a mission: To eat, have fun and be shown love.

At age 30, I wake up everyday with multiple missions. Not only am I raising my 18-month-old alongside my beautiful wife, but I am also working my full-time job, maintaining the personal property (house/ cars) and making sure my family stays safe and comfortable. I have no problem with these duties, as they are what I am called to do as a husband and father.

Your mission might be very similar to mine. Maybe you have a boy or a girl, or even multiple kids.

Even though I understand the missions, I sometimes struggle with making sure my son is one of my main missions. Especially as a new father, I often wonder about the following questions and thought you might as well:

After 8-10 hours of work, how much more can I really offer to my child when I get home? How do I juggle time between my hobbies and family? How can I keep Christ as my first mission with all of these other ones? How can I make sure I don't treat fatherhood like a free pass?

Free Pass? A father with a free pass doesn't take the extra time he has to spend with his kids. A father with a free pass leaves the responsibility of raising his kids to his wife. A father with a free pass doesn't realize the importance of raising a son into manhood. And a father with a free pass doesn't model how a real man should act and behave to his daughter.

There are too many fathers out there that have a mission at work, but they lack in their mission at home. Too many fathers

think they have a free pass when in reality their family is there waiting for him to step up as the father, God is calling him to be.

There is no “free pass”, so man up and start taking the lead.

In my short time of learning how to be a better and more engaged father, I have started to develop a few habits that will help keep me focused on my mission. If you are a new father or soon to be father, consider these few ideas and start applying them as you see fit in your journey.

1. Turn off your distractions. You’ve probably seen or heard of this tip a million times now, but it’s a vital part of your fatherhood mission. When you pull in the driveway after work, take one more look at your phone or emails and then turn it off. Or at least keep it somewhere inside where it won’t distract you. Try to stay away from any other distractions and get engaged in the life of your wife and children. Talk to them, ask them questions and learn about them. Trust me, the other “important” things can wait.

2. Research fun ideas for your kids’ age. Take some time at night or on your lunch break to find out what some fun things are you could be doing with your child. My son is 18 months, so I need to be finding fun activities for us to engage in. Maybe your son or daughter is older; take some time to see what they are into and get involved. Doing this will make your time with them fun and it will make it obvious that you care for them and love them.

3. Engage in activity. Look, I know you’re tired, and maybe this tip isn’t for everyday; but apply as often as possible. Given my sons energy at his age, I know it’s going to be hard for us to have fun if I’m just sitting around and watching him play. I need to get into the fun with him! I love going outside and exploring with him. I love getting my hand tools out and watching him try to use them. The point is to not just

sit back, but to honestly engage! Find ways to engage in the life of your children today!

4. Pray for them. A recent article about how to bless your family offered some creative ways to pray for your wife and children. As a father, it is my responsibility to be praying for my son and family in general. I have learned that I need God's grace and wisdom to help lead me along in my mission. Take some time at the beginning or end of your day and pray for your children. Above all other tips, this is the one you need to remember and act upon.

5. Don't stop. Doing some of the ideas above is great, but doing them week in and week out is the consistency needed in fatherhood. Your consistency in spending time with them will build a solid foundation of trust. It will also set a great example for how you seek God out consistently.

The example you set as a father to your children will be the standard they apply to their walk with God. Don't worry, we all have a lot of work to do and we're in this together. Now let's take it a few steps further.

Discussion: What is one way you could improve in your fatherhood mission this week?

Prayer: Father, thank you for placing me in this leadership position for my family. Help me to consistently find ways to engage with them daily. Amen.

Action: Once you know where you need to improve, start taking action on it today.

***Manturity** is a blog built on establishing spiritual maturity in today's man. The goal is to assist men in building better marriages and help them in grow in maturity and explore different aspects of manhood. features new weekly blog posts, daily social media updates and a powerful resources page. Stay up to date with the Manturity blog communities on Facebook and*

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